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Interview mit

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Vertreter der Fretilin bei den Vereinten Nationen

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Frage nach der Ausgangssituation in Osttimor vor der Invasion. Hatte neben Apodeti auch UDT einen Anschluß an Indonesien befürwortet?

J. R. Horta: If you have this information, this information is wrong. I can give you the telephone numbers of UDT leaders in Lisbon and in Australia. You phone them and ask what was the political platform of UDT in 1974/1975. Both UDT and Fretilin favoured independence for East Timor. Apodeti was the only party and it was the smallest party with a membership of no less than 50 to 200 people that was their registered members in the Portuguese files in Timor. We all raised our membership. And there were election organized by the Portuguese at the village level in 1975 and out of about 200 delegates at the village level Apodeti had only one delegate elected. So Apodeti was the only one that favoured integration with the Indonesians.

In August 1975 UDT staged a coup to eliminate Fretilin and to declare independence immediately. Fretilin counter-attacked, responded two or three weeks later when the negotiations broke down. There was a brief civil war lasting about three weeks. From September till December Fretilin was in full control of the situation, it was witnessed by up to 50 foreigners, journalists, red cross, politicians from Australia, church officials and so on. Some UDT leaders fled to West Timor. Among them my brother in law who was the architect of the UDT coup who lives in Australia now. They fled to West Timor and when they were in West Timor - they were in the border region and asked to enter Indonesia - the Indonesian military said you will enter here if you sign a petition for integration. It was a choice between being taken prisoner by Fretilin or accepting integration. So the few elements - about six of them UDT leaders - who went to Timor they signed a petition changing the platform. So UDT had certain support in Timor because of a particular platform. Six leaders who went to Timor changed the platform. Certainly it does not mean that the whole membership back in Timor supported it. And leaders now who are in Australia and Portugal whom you can contact any time will tell you exactly what happened. And today they denounce it. They denounce what had happened.

Apodeti party had certain presence in Timor and they were about 50 to 200 people. They once favoured integration from the very beginning. But who is the leader of the Apodeti party? At the time a man called Arnaldo Araujo. And who is Arnaldo Araujo? He was am man who during in World War II collaborated with the Japanese forces against the Australians and other Timorese who supported their light course. Ater World War II he was trialed in a military court and sentenced to about ten years in prison. This is the man who later led Apodeti party. And you ask how to explain the relationship: because he acted out of bitterness towards the Portuguese, towards fellow Timorese and because he had some business interest in West Timor.

And what happened to him? Even to him one of the most corrupt sinister figures in Timor what happened to him? Six months after he took office as governor - puppet governor of Timor - he wrote a letter to President Suharto. Six months in June 1976 complaining about brutalities, about atrocities, about corruption. He himself was a corrupt and a brutal man and still he was horrified with what he saw. About a year later he was dismissed. Today he lives in Dili retired.

Then came a second governor, Guillerme Gonsalves, whom I knew very well. He was a chief in the border region. Also under the Portuguese he was a despot. Before the revolution in Portugal he was trialed - some people brought him to court and he was in prison. He again a year or two years later was dismissed by the Indonesians. Finally they found this governor, (Name). So historically if you look in any serious British, Dutch scholar no one argues that the island of Timor was ever part of Indonesia.

What is the present phase of the resistance struggle of Fretilin?

J. R. Horta: The resistance today is far better organized and unified than it ever was. From the end of 1975 to 1978 there was a lot of divisions. Within Fretilin itself and outside Fretilin. Other parties like UDT and Apodeti were not still collaborating with Fretilin. Then slowly because of their own disappointment with the Indonesians - like as I mentioned even puppet governors who were fired - some UDT people who became disillusioned they went to the mountain and joined Fretilin. And slowly there has been a reunification of everybody within Fretilin and outside Fretilin. Particularly since 1979 and 1981 there is a much more solid unity of thinking and of attitude towards the Indonesians. I would not say that 100 per cent of the people in East Timor support Fretilin that can be tested

only in elections. But what I can say with certainty is if not 100 per cent 99 per cent of the population oppose Indonesia's occupation. Not necessarily that they would accept Fretilin this should be left to elections.

Fretilin has been able to suvive for the past ten years in a population of 700.000 or less in 1974/75 a territory about 90.000 square kilometers it has been able to survive against 20.000 to 30.000 troops that back up with air force, Broncos, helicopters, tanks supplied by Germany, by France, by England, by United States, economic assistance by the old Western countries, World Bank, IMF, western Banks. In spite of all this facing these enormous force it has been able to survive. This is possible only when the guerrilla movement has overwhelming support of the people and not only sympathetic support, it has to have active support in their resistance in the countryside or underground in the occupied areas to supply information, to supply food, to supply money, clothing, medical supplies to the guerrillas. That's why the Indonesians decided to put the people in socalled resettlement camps. They applied the reverse of the guerrilla strategy. The guerrilla strategy means essentially that the guerrillas must be among the people like fish in the water. The Indonesians tried to dry up the water where the guerrillas are by withdrawing them into the resettlement camps. This is the classic what Westmoreland did in Vietnam, what Ian Smith tried to do in Rhodesia - now Zimbabwe - with the socalled strategic hemlets.

So what Fretilin did to counterattack this organizing people in the resettlement camps. That's why you see a lot of repression in Dili in the capital because everybody is suspected. A young man, a woman who walks in the street in Dili the Indonesians suspect. He must be carrying information, he must be a link with Fretilin in the mountains. Every person is a suspect in East Timor. And this only shows how Fretilin is organized and that's the only way it can survive.

Under these conditions what are the prospects of Fretilin?

J. R. Horta: We are facing in Timor a real case of physical genocide. Sometimes people use the word genocide very casually, the word has been very much overused and sometimes it looses its real meaning but in the case of East Timor the siatuation falls in the definition of genocide as it was defined in the genocide convention in 1949. The key to the genocide convention is when there is an intention on the part of the perpetrator to kill, to exterminate a whole people physically and culturally. And in the case of Timor yes it feels all this. You have the figure

that 150.000 to 200.000 people have died from mass killings, from executions, from starvation and disappearing. Then the Indonesians on top of this they are using birth control methods forcibly against the population. Something that makes sense when it is voluntary in countries that accept it by a societal or national consensus. When there is overpopulation. And even this is debatable. The US congress cut off funds to the UNFPA because of question of abortion and population control. But in Timor the World Bank is financing it. So women who go to the hospital because of malaria, because of tuberculosis the Indonesian doctors, nurses working under the Indonesian red cross inject forcibly anticonceptional injections. Or they are given pills. The Bishop has been witness when women come to him with the pills and they don't know what it is but they are forced to swallow it in the hospitals.

On top of this still we have transmigration schemes. So what does it mean? Isn't it a well planned strategy to depopulate the country through killings arbitrary with intention to eliminate physically the population, birth control methods using the depo provera which is rejected in many countries of the world and then transmigration schemes.

What are the prospects you ask. Yes we are facing a very very dangerous situation but one thing is certain: As long as this situation of repression, of brutality, of Indonesian military presence continue the people are going to continue to resist. There is nothing that can stop them. It is not me based in New York telexing them or broadcasting from Darwin by radio and say: please go on fighting, it's very interesting, makes us look heroes. No the decision is made there in Timor in the jungles, in the villages, in towns. That there is no other way we have to continue to struggle.

Frage nach dem Umsiedlungsprogrammen Indonesiens.

J. R. Horta: As you know Indonesia has a massive transmigration programme that has been in effect since the sixties. The basis for this transmigration programme is to alleviate the overpopulation in Java. Java has about 80 million people, it is overcrowded, has no land according to the Indonesian officials themselves. So they need to redistribute the population and it shows two main areas. In the past it was West New Guinea, very rich agriculturally, the area is very fertile. So they began to transmigrate families from Bali, from Java and Sumatra to West New Guinea. According to Indonesian official target which is supported by the World Bank - and in World Bank there is a ruling which says that the World Bank should not support transmigration schemes that might destroy, might

affect the cultural environment of a national group. So these people according to Indonesian statistics within ten to twenty years they hope to have three million Javanese in West New Guinea. Of course they might not be able to achieve this target but this is what their plans are.

The population of West New Guinea is about 700.000. This means that the people there in West New Guinea if Indonesia achieves that plans through killings, through birth control and transmigration the people in West New Ginea who are totally foreigner, different from all the Javanese are going to be a minority in their own country.

East Timor has been declared transmigration zone already back in 1976. By then the regional director for transmigration said East Timor would become a transmigration zone. But only about two years ago they began to implement this plan. So far there are only a few families, Balinese families mainly who are settled in the Maliana region near the border. That's where they have a showcase agricultural project financed partly by U.S. Catholic Services partly by USAID. And when some foreigners go there to visit that camp in Maliana they all are very impressed how the people there are very healthy, they work very well. Some even paternalistically and with a very colonial mind they say the East Timorese now are a bit more civilized, now they are working better. In the past they were a bit lazy and indolent. But in fact those people are not Timorese. They are Balinese families who have been settled, who have been given houses, water supply, medical care and schools.

And the results of this agricultural center which is doing very well does not benefit the people of East Timor. It goes to feed the Indonesian military, feed the Indonesian civilians, there are thousands now in Dili and in other centers. But the transmigration programme is not working in Timor for security reasons. Families in Bali and Java who know about the situation in Timor they seem to refuse to go.

Welchen Ratschlag würden Sie der Bundesregierung in Sachen Osttimor und Indonesien geben?

J. R. Horta: Being a realist, I wouldn't say a pragmatist, I am a pragmatist but within limits, you know, I believe pragmatism should be limited by certain principals but knowing how this countries and other Western countries function the only thing I would ask chancellor Kohl would be: please, Mr. Chancellor, we understand you have overwhelming economic interest in Indonesia, you have a lot of investments, trade, and you want to increase this

bilateral relation, but at least if you have some moral values use your relationship with Indonesia to stop the killing, the barbarities in Timor and press Indonesia to allow international organizations - German or NGO's - to work in Timor to have a physical presence there on a permanent basis.

And I would ask the chancellor not to recognize Fretilin, not to cut off aid to Indonesia because of war in Timor but to promote a peaceful solution to the problem. West Germany could work together with Portugal as a peacemaker in this issue to call for negotiations involving the Portuguese, the Secretary General of the United Nations who is now conducting negotiations on this issue, the Indonesians and East Timorese representatives in a round table conference. Let us work out our differences and resolve this problem. This is the role that West Germany could play. But unfortunately the German position has been quite negative, quite different.

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Welche Unterstützung erhält Fretilin von Organisationen in der Pazifik-Region

J. R. Horta: South Pacific Forum being a governmental institution does not take any stand on Timor. Individually the only country that really support us diplomatically is Vanuatu. All the other countries in the Pacific Forum neither support Indonesia or do not take a stand partucularly Australia and New Zealand in spite of the changes of government. The peace movement in Australia and in New Zealand they are essentially concerned with whether or when a nuclear weapon is going to drop on their heads. They are not really concerned with current ongoing struggles suffering West New Guinea, in New Caledonia and so on. Individual members, activists, of the peace movement in Australia and New Zealand are very supportive of the Timorese issue. Also certain branches of the peace movement like in Melbourne they are very supportive, in Canberra. But by and large the peace movements are like some sort of a Club Méditerranée, they have a specific interest, they only worry about whether the white Anglosaxon species is going to survive a nuclear holocaust, they don't care much about indigenous aborigines in West New Guinea and in Timor. I have discussed many times with them and I have told them what I really think. And they find it difficult to argue with me on this. There are other organisations in Australia - the church movement, the churches in Australia, members of the Australian Labour Party, faction of Labour Party, left and right, New Zealand - are very supportive of the Timor struggle.